

WEEKLY TALLAHASSEE UPDATE



It is hard to believe that the Florida Legislature has already completed week 6 of the 2023 legislative session. In just a few weeks, the Florida Legislature will adjourn their two-month legislative session, which may happen on time as long as the 2023-2034 budget is agreed on by the Florida Senate and House of Representatives.

By the end of week 6, the Florida House had passed their 2023-2024 tax package, which included multiple priorities of the Florida Chamber that were identified as pro-business and/or pro-consumer. Here are some of the major takeaways from their proposed tax package:

- Reducing the business rent tax from 5.5% to 4.5% beginning on July 1, 2023. This proposed 1% business rent tax decrease will save local Florida businesses an estimated \$400 million. Currently, Florida is the only state that levies a business rent tax, which is seen as a competitive disadvantage to businesses that operate in other states. The business rent tax is set to decrease to 2% once the unemployment compensation trust fund is replenished, which was impacted deeply in 2020 from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- A sales tax exemption on the purchase of equipment and machinery that will be used to store, produce, and transport renewable natural gas.
- Eliminating the loophole in the documentary stamp tax that negatively impacts Florida's small business community which relates to the Small Business Administration 504 loan program.
- Offering consumers relief from increased taxes, a freeze of local communications services tax (CST) rates for three years.
- Sales tax holidays and tax breaks on various items during certain times of the year, including the back to school, disaster preparedness, and freedom summer sales tax holidays.

The Senate Finance and Tax Committee has proposed to have their 2023-2023 tax package heard in its first committee on April 18.

HB 121 - Florida Kidcare Program Eligibility, has passed the Florida House of Representatives with a unanimous vote of 105-0 on April 13. Through a phased approach, the bill will increase the income eligibility threshold for coverage under the Florida Kidcare Program, which will allow a larger group of Floridians to purchase subsidized health insurance for children that are uninsured and in low-income households. **SB 246** has one committee stop remaining before being heard on the Senate floor. To learn more about the bill, [please click here](#).

SB 240 - Education, sponsored by Senator Hutson has passed through the committee process and is ready to be heard on the floor of the Florida Senate. This bill is included in the "workforce package" supported by the Florida Chamber, and was previously detailed in the March 22, 2023, VACC weekly update. The legislation "aims to provide all high school students the option to enroll in at least one work-based learning opportunity and encourages public/private partnerships by allowing schools, local workforce boards, community or faith-based organizations, and trade associations to sponsor apprenticeships." The workforce education package also "encourage the progression of career and technical education programs by allowing middle school students to continue a sequential career and technical education program in high school." To learn more about this bill, [please click here](#).

Thank you for reading this week's Tallahassee Update! More to come in the following weeks as the 2023 Florida Legislative Session wraps up.